1: Jenness--171 (1913-16) 1922 Copper Eskimo
116, 753, 755

"For the forerunners of death, accidents and sickness, the Eskimo knows of only one cause, the malignant activities of evil spirits or of the shades of the dead. Many of Higilak's seances in Victoria island were held for the purpose of propitiating or intimidating these shades and dispelling their influence. The natives have no knowledge whatever of medicine, and very little of surgery. A head-ache is sometimes cured by bleeding, broken limbs are set in splints and frozen members are amputated. Aksiatak, for example, dislocated his ankle while wrestling in the dance-house; he pulled it back into place, covered it with a long deerskin sock and laid three splints around it, one on each side and one at the back, keeping them firmly in place by means of a raw-hide lashing; a second cord running from his hand to the sole of his foot enabled him to raise his leg without bending it. A year later his son Nakitok fell from the roof and broke his thigh; the Eskimos set his leg in splints also. Both accidents were ascribed to the machinations of evil spirits and the shamans were asked to appease them. A painful swelling on the arm of the old shaman Ilatsiak was cured by lancing. For snow-blindness the natives use counter-irritants, flooding the eyes with the smoke of burning heather or of the Dryas integrifolia, or tying a louse to a thread and letting it scratch the sclerotis. Complaints that are considered magical in their origin, however, find their surest remedies in counter-magic, so a shaman is usually called in at once to diagnose the cause and prescribe a cure. In most cases he discovers that some taboo

has been broken, or that the patient has committed some action which offended a certain dead person's shade. The latter was the interpretation given to the illness of the Noahognik Eskimo Hitkok, who killed his dog in a fit of anger because it refused to follow him to the sealing ground; in this case the resentful shade was the dead relative after whom the dog was named. (1)"

"1. There was no conception of the dead man's soul residing in the dog; Hitkok had merely shown disrespect to him by killing his namesake."

1: Jenness--172
116, 753

(1913-16) 1922

Copper Eskimo

"The soul is the mainspring of a man's vital strength. A dead man, or more accurately his shade, tarrak, may steal the soul of a living man, who will then pine away and die. In the winter of 1915 a Puivlik Eskimo named Wikkiak and the little boy Haugak were both ill at the same time. Wikkiak recovered soon after I visited their settlement, whereupon a shaman announced that his soul had been carried away by the shade of a dead man, but that my dog Jumbo had brought it back. Higilak therefore tied a strip of white deerskin round Jumbo's neck, thinking that perhaps he might be grateful for its warmth and bring back Haugak's soul also. The boy recovered, but a few months later Higilak fell ill herself, and Jumbo had to come to the rescue once again. In the eyes of the Eskimos he was clearly not an ordinary dog, but possessed an unusual amount of vital force. On this occasion, therefore, Higilak rubbed his saliva over her forehead in order that some of this force might enter into her and overcome her sickness. Jumbo's reward was another neckband of white deerskin."

1: Jenness--173 (1913-16) 1922 Copper Eskimo
116, 753

"Not infrequently a malady is conceived of as something concrete implanted in the body by an offended soul. The shaman then has to extract the object, which he does by the aid of his familiar spirits. To prove his success he displays to his audiences pieces of bone, or worms, or similar things that he has secreted on his person beforehand. The laxatives that we occasionally administered answered the same purpose. Both sickness and ill-luck can be embodied in physical objects and carried away. Haviuyak had a boil on his arm which he pricked with a needle as soon as it came to a head, squeezing the pus on to a piece of caribou meat. He asked me to let him give it to Scotty, the biggest dog in my team, who would carry the contagion away with him when I left. One of his own dogs snatched at the meat, but he kicked it away and anxiously watched till the whole morsel had disappeared down Scotty's throat. To propitiate the dog he tied a band of white deerskin round its neck. Some days later he was asked how the boil was progressing, and answered, 'It has all disappeared, thanks to the dog.' Another Eskimo, Kaiyoranna, made me a present of two bone pins fastened to the outside of a small deerskin bag. I wanted to look inside the bag, but he checked me and tried to draw my attention to the fine workmanship in the pins. Later, after I had left the camp, I found only four old scraps of skin in the bag. I showed it to some of the natives, and they explained that Kaiyoranna had fastened some one's illness or ill-luck in the bag, and added the pins as a bribe to induce me to take it away."

11: Stefansson--271-273 (1908-1912) 1913 Copper Eskimo
116, 736, 753

"We did not have to go over eight miles till we came to a camp of five houses, pitched on the ice about ten or twenty yards from shore, at the northeast corner of Simpson Bay. We were engaged with the help of some of the local men in pitching our tent about two hundred yards from the village when we noticed a man, evidently stone blind, come walking towards us, feeling about with a long cane as a blind man does. Two or three children stood watching him and kept warning him of the tide cracks, which were numerous here in the ice as they are everywhere near shore. The children kept shouting to him: 'Turn to the right! Turn to the left! Again to the left! Now watch out for a tide crack!' These cracks are dangerous to a man [272] who walks carelessly, for they are often covered with snow so as to be invisible and are wide enough for a man's foot to slip in, with considerable danger not only of a bad fall but of breaking a bone. With skill acquired through long blindness he avoided the tide cracks dexterously and walked straight up to where the children's voices told him that I was standing beside our sled, unloading it.

When he got hear he told me that he knew already who I was, and that very likely I knew who he was, for he was a man so much more unfortunate than other men that the story of his misfortune had traveled to distant places. No doubt I had heard the story, he said, but nevertheless he would tell it to me himself so that I might know it from his own lips and take warning from it and tell my friends to do the same.

Many years ago his house had been standing by itself some distance from the village, but from where he stood beside the seal-hole watching for the seal to come up he could see several other hunters out sealing. The seal, when it came, proved to be a bearded one, but being a strong man he had been able to hold it and to kill it. Without assistance he had with his ice pick enlarged the breathing-hole enough to pull the animal out. (It was no mean feat, seeing that a bearded seal will weigh from six hundred to eight hundred pounds.) Up to this time he had not thought of the other hunters, but now he looked around and saw that they were all far away, and while distinctly visible he felt sure that none of them had any idea what kind of a seal he had caught. (The hunter's law does not require that the hunters within sight be summoned to share at the cutting up of a common small seal.) When a bearded seal is killed all the hunters within view must be called in to share the prize.

It had occurred to him that by keeping the thing secret (by pretending this was a common seal), he might keep the animal to himself, and especially the skin, for he knew that he could sell pieces of it to a neighboring tribe who seldom catch bearded seals, for numerous articles of value. Accordingly he secretly cut the animal up, gave out the story that he had killed only a small seal, and pledged his wife to secrecy; but the story leaked out as such stories will. People came to him and took away from him both the skin and the [273] meat and reproached him bitterly. He now repented his act

and felt crushed by the disapproval of his people, but his punishment was to be made even heavier, for within a year he began to lose his eyesight and in another year he was stone blind. Since then he, poor miserable man, had been blind and a charge upon the community. Thus it was sure to go with those who did wicked things; and while he felt sure that I was a good man, nevertheless to know his story would do me no harm, and he wished I would pass it on to others, warning them to avoid selfish ways."

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

of my companions seemed proof against every outrage, but my own rebelled. An insidious dysentery attacked me, making me at last so weak that I could hardly drag myself to the fishing-ground. My throat became dry like parchment, and drinking the clear water in the fishing-holes merely aggravated the dysentery without relieving the thirst. Altogether my predicament was rather alarming.

No parents could have been kinder to me at this time than were Ikpuck and Icehouse. Believing that all disease had a supernatural origin, Icehouse tried to exorcise the agencies responsible for my ill-health. That she failed to cure me distressed but did not surprise her, for, as she herself remarked, Eskimo remedies had no efficacy with white men. She showed her sympathy in a more practical manner by giving me the choicest morsels of fish, and by foraging far and wide for dryads in order to cook more frequently. Yet in spite of all her efforts my health failed to improve, and at last I sent The Runner to the Lake of Dancing to bring me a few ounces of malted milk and three pounds of dog-pemmican that I had stored there in a cache. The malted milk lasted me two days, after which I began on the pemmican, prepared forty years earlier for the fur posts of the Hudson's Bay Trading Company. It was brown with antiquity, and consisted merely of dried beef crushed to powder, with here and there fragments of bones; but mixed

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

into a paste with cold water it was more digestible than the half-raw fish on the drying-poles, and more palatable than saltless fish boiled over a smoky flame in a cupful of water. So for a week I ate nothing but pemmican. Gradually the dysentery lessened, my strength began to return, and, though the intolerable thirst continued, there was hope of a permanent recovery if in some way we could improve our diet.

I talked the matter over with Ikpuck. He could understand my dislike of raw fish, but not its effect on my health, unless, indeed, my guardian spirit had forbidden its consumption. Yet he would gladly do anything to aid my recovery. It was the end of July; the fur of the caribou was in its prime, and the fishing season nearing its close. He had intended to pass the remainder of the summer wandering in the hills to the north-east, where caribou were numerous but fuel scarce; however, seeing that I might eat nothing but cooked food, we could move southward toward the coast if I wished, and travel over plains amply clothed with heather and willow. We agreed to adopt this second plan and communicated the decision to our companions.

A snow-storm, not an unusual occurrence even in the height of summer, delayed our departure a few days; but as soon as the snow melted again we packed all our fish to the Lake of Dancing and cached it with our other possessions. Then we turned southward, away